



STATEMENT OF AT&T CONNECTICUT

**Regarding Raised House Bill No. 5474
AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTONOMY OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES
REGULATORY AUTHORITY
Before the Committee on Energy and Technology
March 15, 2012**

Proposal:

Raised House Bill No. 5474 makes various changes to the statutes regarding the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority ("PURA") with respect to their powers and duties.

Comments:

AT&T respectfully opposes Sections 11 and 17 of the Raised Bill.

Section 11 of the Raised Bill extends PURA authority over enforcement to orders of the Connecticut Siting Council ("CSC"). The extension of PURA authority in this manner would intrude into – and conflict with – the existing statutory authority of the CSC. Under existing law, the CSC already has statutory authority to seek court orders as needed to enforce its orders and decisions. Section 11 would conflict with the current statute by giving PURA enforcement authority expressly given to the courts.

For these reasons, this section is duplicative and unnecessary. The CSC has particular expertise over issues and concerns under its purview. It rightly is in the best position to enforce its orders and decisions rather than have its authority extended to a different division.

Section 17 of the Raised Bill creates a new enforcement division within the PURA. This new enforcement division is not needed. PURA already has broad authority to enforce its orders and regulations under Connecticut General Statutes Section 16-41 which empowers the PURA to fine parties who violate their orders up to \$10,000 per day, per offense. There is a long-established process by which PURA can exercise its authority under this section of the statutes. In addition, PURA has not hesitated to exercise its authority under this existing provision of the law when it has felt the need to do so. Creating a new division is therefore not necessary; the Authority currently has authority to enforce its orders, and a new division would increase costs with no resulting benefit.

Conclusion:

AT&T opposes Sections 11 and 17 of Raised House Bill No. 5474 and urges the Committee to reject those provisions.